

Thank you for taking this time to read my submission.

I have worked with children from 11-18 years for 22 years as a public school teacher in Edmonton and as a counselor for 4 years at Alberta Hospital.

I have listened to and worked with many young people confused about their place in the world and the roles of parents, teachers and friends that surround them.

One frequent observation is the lack of healthy 2 parent role models at home.

We know that parents and parent approval is important in the pre-teen years but soon teenagers seek influence from further afield. Everyone worries about influences facing their child as the child demonstrates their independence.

But even the most independent youth will check back with parents. This may be by questioning or by silently looking for subtle signs of approval or disapproval. I've never met a child who did not care at all about what the family thought of him/her.

Funerals bring back defiant kids and Grandkids. Why? Because they listened, they communicated. Their opinions mattered.

We should encourage "conversation trust" at all ages.

I urge you to not pass Bill C6. Allow kids to seek opinions. They will learn, grow and decide based on what they hear from different sources.

Thank you for your time,

Ken Harcus